

EDUCATION WEEK

American Education's Newspaper of Record

Volume IX, Number 12 • November 22, 1989

1989 Editorial Projects in Education / \$2.50

Postponement of Child-Care Bill Spurs Fears About Its Prospects

By Deborah L. Cohen

WASHINGTON—Congressional leaders have postponed action on child-care legislation until next year, a move advocates warned last week could impede the bill's momentum in the 101st Congress.

"The decision to basically kill the bill for this session has seriously jeopardized the possibility that Congress will pass a major child-care initiative before the 1990 elections," said Michael Edwards, manager of Congressional relations for the National Education Association. "The longer it languishes, the more difficult it will be to reinvigorate it."

Agreement on a child-care package this month by conferees from the House Education and Labor Committee and the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee had bolstered proponents' hope that the Congress could pass a bill before adjourning for the year. (See *Education*

Week, Nov. 15, 1989.)

But House leaders concluded last week that the measure was dead, according to aides, when they were unable to press Ways and Means Committee members to proceed with adding a separate package of tax credits and block grants to the education panels' proposal.

Representatives Thomas J. Downey of New York and George Miller of California, both Democrats, had favored substituting the separate measure—which included an expansion in the earned-income tax credit and an increase in the Title XX Social Services Block Grant—for state child-care grants included in the education panels' agreement.

The state grants—part of a \$1.7-billion plan that included funds for school-based child care, Head Start expansion, and child-care standards and training—were included in a part of the pact known as

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Keith Boyer/Birmingham Post Herald

Kyle Muir, 3, completes a puzzle at a Birmingham, Ala., child-care center.

State Chiefs Fail To Reach Accord On School Goals

Council Appoints Panel To Propose Statement

By Reagan Walker

OKLAHOMA CITY—In a lively discussion on the effort to set national performance goals for education, state school chiefs meeting here last week failed to reach agreement on exactly what the goals should be and how progress toward those goals should be measured.

Instead, the Council of Chief State School Officers decided to appoint seven of its members to prepare a consensus statement for presentation at a Dec. 7 hearing sponsored by the National Governors' Association.

The meeting will be the first public follow-up to the education summit convened by President Bush with the nation's governors in September. At the summit, the participants signed a joint statement agreeing to establish national goals and to work for more flexibility in federal education funding.

Gov. Bill Clinton of Arkansas, a lead governor in the goal-setting process, advised the group to formulate clear and specific testimony for the December meeting. The council must be able to justify any exact numbers and timetables outlined in its proposed goals, he added.

Ted Sanders, the U.S. Undersecretary of Education, encouraged the chiefs to consider all possible areas where goals might be set, not just the seven in the summit statement.

[The joint statement released at the close of the summit said the goals will

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Private Placement of Spec.-Ed. Students Straps Districts

By Debra Viadero

When several disabled children moved into Dedham, Mass., last year, the town found itself in a fiscal dilemma confronting many other small communities across the country.

Under federal and state law, the children were entitled to special-education services. But under the town's financial constraints, paying for the privately run programs they needed—a \$39,000-a-year day school in one boy's case—would have plunged the community deeply into debt.

Dedham school officials tackled the problem by hunting up cost savings in other areas. They put off building repairs, cut back on custodial help, and left a teaching vacancy unfilled in a program for gifted and talented students.

But such solutions, they say, are temporary at best.

"If these kinds of costs continue to rise," said Patricia Walsh, the district's special-education director, "there's no way the school department can provide all the things that every kid needs and still meet the legal requirements for special-education students."

Similar warnings are coming from special educators wrestling with their own budget problems in a number of other states. While each situation is distinguished by its own regional complexities, a common bogeyman surfaces in them all: The high cost of placing handicapped children in private settings.

"It's come down to a wrestling match between human rights and economics," said Johnathan McIntire, director of programs at the Vermont Achievement Center, a privately run day program in that state. "As one legislator put it to me,

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S.C. Board Adopts Regulatory Relief for Top-Scoring Schools

By Ellen Flax

The South Carolina Board of Education has approved a sweeping deregulation plan that will give an unprecedented degree of regulatory relief to about one-tenth of the state's approximately 1,000 schools.

Under the measure, schools with a history of superior academic achievement will automatically be released from numerous state regulations governing staffing, class scheduling, and class structure.

Among other exemptions, principals in such schools will no longer have to be certified as a principal, and teachers, with the exception of special-education instructors, will not have to be certified in the subject areas in which they teach.

The approximately 100 schools that

Continued on Page 16

A.F.T. Reaches Out to Poland, Hungary

U.S. Educators Introduce Democracy to East European Schools

By Robert Rothman

As democratic stirrings sweep through Eastern Europe, American educators are working to help their counterparts there foster the teaching and practice of democracy in schools.

Over the past year, officials from the American Federation of Teachers have been meeting with teachers' union representatives in Poland and Hungary to discuss ways of bringing about greater democratic control over school decision-

making.

And this month, the education historian Diane Ravitch, who has been an influential voice in the debate over social-studies instruction in this country, traveled to Poland to introduce teachers and education officials to ways of teaching about democracy.

Such efforts, said Ms. Ravitch, an adjunct professor of history and education at Columbia University's Teachers College, represent "the beginning of a lengthy conversation" with the fledg-

ling democracies of the once-monolithic Soviet bloc.

"The process of change does not occur easily or spontaneously," she said in an interview. "They have a long tradition of education by authority. I don't think anybody thinks things will happen quickly."

Although contacts between educators in the United States and the Soviet Union have grown rapidly under President Mikhail S. Gorbachev's policy of

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A lawsuit will test the approved anti-busing initiative.

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Voter backlash becomes a school-reform consideration.

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Opposition softens on the idea of 'flexible' funding rules.

IN SUMMARY

Boston Teachers Eye Strike

Six months after Boston teachers and school officials agreed on a new contract, union members are considering a one-day strike to protest the city's inability to pay for the contract. **Page 4.**

The Democrats Take Advice

A group of moderate Democrats meeting in Washington last week to promote a "mainstream agenda" for their party heard differing advice on school issues from two prominent educators. **Page 5.**

Lunchtime Tragedy

Seven students were killed and another 18 injured in Newburgh, N.Y., last week, when high winds caused a wall to collapse during lunchtime in a crowded elementary-school cafeteria. **Page 7.**

Maryland's Reform Measure

A major new school-reform effort in Maryland ignores the needs of teachers and denigrates their efforts, the head of the state's largest teachers' union charged last week. **Page 14.**

Easing a 'Bankruptcy' Law

The Kentucky board of education last week voted to ease the state's "academic bankruptcy" law as it applies to school districts with heavy concentrations of students from low-income families. **Page 15.**

Funding Bill Near Approval

The Congress last week neared final approval of legislation providing 1990 funding for the Education Department, and began on plans to reverse last month's automatic budget cuts. **Page 17.**

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FORUM

Reducing Class Size — Affordable? Efficient?
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EDUCATION WEEK (ISSN 0277-4232) is published 40 times per year (weekly except for the first week in January, the last week in June, the month of July, the first four weeks in August, and the last two weeks in December) by Editorial Projects in Education, Incorporated. Editorial and advertising sales offices are located at 4301 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Suite 250, Washington, D.C. 20008. (202) 364-4114. Subscriptions: U.S.: \$49.94 for 40 issues. Canada: \$72.94 for 40 issues. Foreign: \$114.94 (airmail) and \$82.94 (surface mail) for 40 issues. Second-class postage paid at Washington, D.C., and at additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to EDUCATION WEEK, P.O. Box 2083, Marion, Ohio 43305. Volume IX, Issue 12

ACROSS THE NATION

NATIONAL

Catholic Bishops Revoke Support For Information on Condoms

The nation's Catholic bishops have approved a statement that removes the church's qualified support for AIDS-education programs that include information about condoms.

"Education in human sexuality which tells young people in effect that abstinence and 'safe sex' are equally acceptable options sends a contradictory, confusing message," states the document approved earlier this month at a meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The new policy supersedes a 1987 statement that allowed discussion of condoms in education programs. That document, while restating traditional church doctrine on sexuality—which strongly condemns extramarital sex and artificial means of contraception—acknowledged that "some people will not act as they can and should." (See *Education Week*, Oct. 25, 1989.)

STATES

Indiana Board Votes To Proceed With School-Accreditation Program

The Indiana Board of Education has voted to proceed with a performance-based accreditation program it had put on hold last month.

The board had suspended the program—which rates schools on the basis of such factors as pupil test scores and attendance and graduation rates—after the education department released a list of 65 schools that failed on initial review to qualify for immediate accreditation. (See *Education Week*, Oct. 18, 1989.)

In the wake of strong public reaction to the list, the board raised questions about the accreditation process and asked for a briefing from department officials.

Although board members indicated at the briefing this month that they may seek

regulatory and legislative changes, "they decided they needed to move forward" with the next phase of accreditation, a department spokesman said.

The spokesman said some members recommended withholding in the future the names of schools that fail the initial review until on-site reviews can be conducted to determine if there were "mitigating circumstances."

The department is expected to report back to the board with the results of its on-site reviews early next year.

■ **A multi-state investigation of anti-trust violations in the sale of food to schools has uncovered an alleged bid-rigging conspiracy in Kentucky**, officials said.

G. Maurice Binder, a former sales manager for Flav-O-Rich Inc. in London, Ky., has pleaded guilty in federal court to helping rig bids in the sale of milk to school systems in the south-central region of the

state.

The antitrust violations are part of a larger alleged conspiracy in which milk distributors tried over several years to eliminate competition by agreeing in advance who would submit the low bids for milk contracts with school districts, according to Robert E. Trevey, chief of the criminal division of the U.S. attorney's office in Lexington, Ky.

A plea-bargaining agreement protects Mr. Binder from further prosecution if he cooperates with an ongoing investigation of alleged bid rigging in Kentucky and Tennessee, officials said.

Similar state and federal investigations have led to convictions or civil settlements against milk and bread contractors in Florida and Georgia.

■ **The county "teacher of the year" in Moultrie, Ga., will take her case to the superior court of Colquitt County following the state board of education's decision to uphold her dismissal by the local school board on grounds of "immorality."**

And, contending that her civil rights have been violated, Vicki Sherling also plans to file a lawsuit against the school district, according to her lawyer, William Norwood.

A jury acquitted Ms. Sherling last August on charges of helping her husband grow marijuana in their backyard greenhouse. (See *Education Week*, Sept. 13, 1989.)

At its Nov. 9 meeting, the state board of education voted 4 to 3 to uphold Ms. Sherling's dismissal, concluding that there was sufficient evidence to support the local board's decision, said James Smith, the state board's chairman.

"The four members of the board determined that evidence indicating that marijuana was being kept in the bedroom where she slept was enough grounds to uphold the local board's decision," Mr. Smith explained.

Ms. Sherling intends to defend her right to teach on the basis that she was denied due process, said Mr. Norwood, noting that the "statute which gave the local board the right to fire her on the basis of 'immorality' does not specify what constitutes immorality."

Mr. Norwood also asserted that statements made by members of the local board before their decision indicated that Ms. Sherling's case had been prejudged.

Would You Give This Man a Job?

Most school districts across the country would leap at the opportunity to hire a teacher-candidate who holds degrees in philosophy, political science, and law, and who has expressed great interest in working at an entry-level job in an inner-city school.

They would be even more interested if the candidate were politically well-connected and a prominent member of the community. Not so Philadelphia.

For more than two months, local school officials have put on hold an application from a candidate who holds all those credentials and more. And who happens to be the former state secretary of education to boot.

The candidate in question, Thomas K. Gilhool, does indeed hold degrees from Yale University in those fields and was a Fulbright Scholar in town planning at the London School of Economics.

Mr. Gilhool decided to pursue a new career as a public-school history teacher after resigning as secretary of education last June during a dispute over special-education funding.

When he recently took the district's teacher examination, he reportedly scored third out of the 57 candidates taking the test that day. (Mr. Gilhool did not return repeated telephone calls to his home and office.)

But despite his eminent qualifications and his willingness to take a cut in pay from the \$55,000 a year he earned as a public-interest lawyer to the \$25,000 he will make as a first-year teacher, Mr. Gilhool's application was put on hold in September.

The application was delayed after

Superintendent of Schools Constance Clayton voiced suspicions that, because Mr. Gilhool was tested in a separate room from the other candidates, he had been given favorable treatment. (See *Education Week*, Nov. 8, 1989.)



Thomas K.
Gilhool

When Ms. Clayton announced last month that she would take disciplinary action against six of her aides who were involved in processing Mr. Gilhool's application, the school board began its own inquiry into the matter.

Mr. Gilhool's quest became something of a cause célèbre in the City of Brotherly Love, and *The Philadelphia Inquirer* characterized the situation as "absurd" and called on the school board to "clear away the remaining obstacles in his path."

The board's two-week investigation, which ended Nov. 8, did just that. The board not only concluded that staff members involved with Mr. Gilhool's application committed no improprieties, but it cleared the way for the former education secretary to begin his new career as a teacher.

As of last week, school officials said, Mr. Gilhool was still choosing a school.

—J.W.

Correction

Due to a writing error, an article on Seattle's election returns in the Nov. 15 issue incorrectly reported the winner in the mayoral race.

Norm Rice, a veteran city councilman who campaigned against the city's anti-busing initiative, was elected mayor.

Michael White was elected mayor in Cleveland.

DISTRICTS

Watchdog Group Calls Remediation Inadequate in New York City

Plagued by inadequate funding, a cumbersome organizational structure, and cursory monitoring, New York City's remedial programs often fail to ensure that all students receive training in basic skills, a report by a civic watchdog group concludes.

Despite a \$231 million budget for remediation, the report by the Educational Priorities Panel notes, many elementary students eligible for services do not receive them, particularly in mathematics.

For example, more than 40 percent of 4th graders entitled to receive math remediation do not receive services, the study found, and neither the state department of education nor the city's board of education checks whether all students actually receive services to which they are legally entitled.

In addition, it found, schools often hire paraprofessionals to teach remedial classes, even though such instructors are less prepared academically than regular teachers and lack opportunities for class preparation. Moreover, it states, schools tend to rely on "pullout" programs, "despite the scheduling difficulties and stigma this model engenders."

The panel recommends that the state fully fund its remedial mandate, and reconsider the rate at which it reimburses the district for remedial services.

■ The Detroit school board has voted to end its practice of issuing two categories of high-school diplomas—one for students who have passed the minimum number of required courses, and one for those who also pass a locally developed proficiency test.

The nation's seventh-largest school system began issuing "endorsed" diplomas 10 years ago for those passing the proficiency test, and will eliminate the distinction by 1993 under a resolution passed last month.

The board will await recommendations from the district's staff before deciding whether to require all students to pass a proficiency test or some other measure of their achievement as a requirement for receiving a diploma.

■ The Detroit public schools should consider creating magnet schools and other means of encouraging mixing between city and suburban students, according to a new report commissioned by the Michigan Department of Education.

Because Detroit's mostly poor and black students rarely come into contact with positive role models, concludes the report, by the Washington D.C.-based Institute for Educational Leadership, the public school system faces nearly insurmountable obstacles in educating its students.

Magnet schools located in Detroit but staffed by suburban educators would be one means of attracting white and middle-class students back into Detroit, states the report's author, Harold Hodgkinson, a researcher who has gained national recognition for his forecasts of changes in student demographics.

Donald Bemis, Michigan's superintendent of schools, endorsed the report's findings, but said he would confer with suburban school officials before making his own recommendations.

■ A 17-year-old boy at Alfred E. Smith High School in New York City was shot to death last week, apparently accidentally, by another student who had brought a gun to school.

Police are investigating the shooting to determine whether it was an accident. They have arrested a 15-year-old boy, but because he is a minor, his name has not

been released.

The boy has been charged with second-degree manslaughter and possession of a deadly weapon.

According to police, the gun went off while the boy was "handling" the weapon in a school hallway, and there was no dispute.

School officials identified the victim as Alexander Stephens. He was hit with a single bullet in the chest while standing nearby, and was pronounced dead upon arrival at Lincoln Hospital.

■ The Aspen, Colo., school district plans no changes in its policy on guest speakers despite a furor in recent weeks over school visits by an anti-fur group.

Officials at Aspen Elementary School say they were caught off guard by the tone of a presentation by representatives of a local animal-rights organization and an anti-fur group.

"I thought they were going to be discussing the humane treatment of animals," said Barb Tarbet, principal of the school.

The speakers went beyond that, she said, by advocating anti-fur themes and showing a film of leg-hold traps and caged animals on a fur farm.

"It did get a little bit political, which I was not happy about," she said. "I'm not sure it is an issue I would bring into the elementary school."

The groups also made presentations at the district's middle and high schools.

The school board discussed the issue, including some board members' complaints that their children came away from the talks vowing not to eat hamburgers and other red meat. However, the board decided to leave it up to building principals to decide about visiting speakers.

In the future, Ms. Tarbet said, she would try to make sure discussions about controversial issues are balanced and appropriate for the age group of students in her school.

■ The University of Hartford has announced a plan to offer half-price tuition for any student from a public or private high school in the city of Hartford.

The university will cut tuition in half, to \$5,496, for all high-school graduates from Hartford who meet admissions requirements.

Humphrey Tonkin, president of the private university, said in announcing the program last month that he wanted to help the city's 25,000 schoolchildren, 92 percent of whom are members of minority groups and from low-income families.

About 1,000 seniors who attend three city high schools, a Roman Catholic high school, and a state-run vocational school will be eligible for the reduced tuition beginning next fall.

■ Members of the District of Columbia Board of Education have attempted to block plans by Mayor Marion Barry to visit schools to gain support for his reelection.

R. Calvin Lockridge, a board member, reportedly accused Mr. Barry of "trying to 'out politic' " Jesse Jackson, who has been touring the city's schools in an effort to encourage parental involvement in education. Many observers believe Mr. Jackson will enter next fall's mayoral race, although he has denied it.

City officials say Mr. Barry is planning a series of visits to city schools over the next several months.

Observers say board members are also concerned about the mayor's planned visits to schools because of his alleged involvement in a drug scandal. A former city employee who was arrested on drug charges claims that Mr. Barry purchased crack cocaine from him earlier this year. The Mayor disputes the charges.

DIMENSIONS

Educational Attainment in the U.S.

While the large difference in the percentage of white and black Americans who complete high school has decreased since the 1940's, the two groups remain far apart in college-completion rates, according to recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

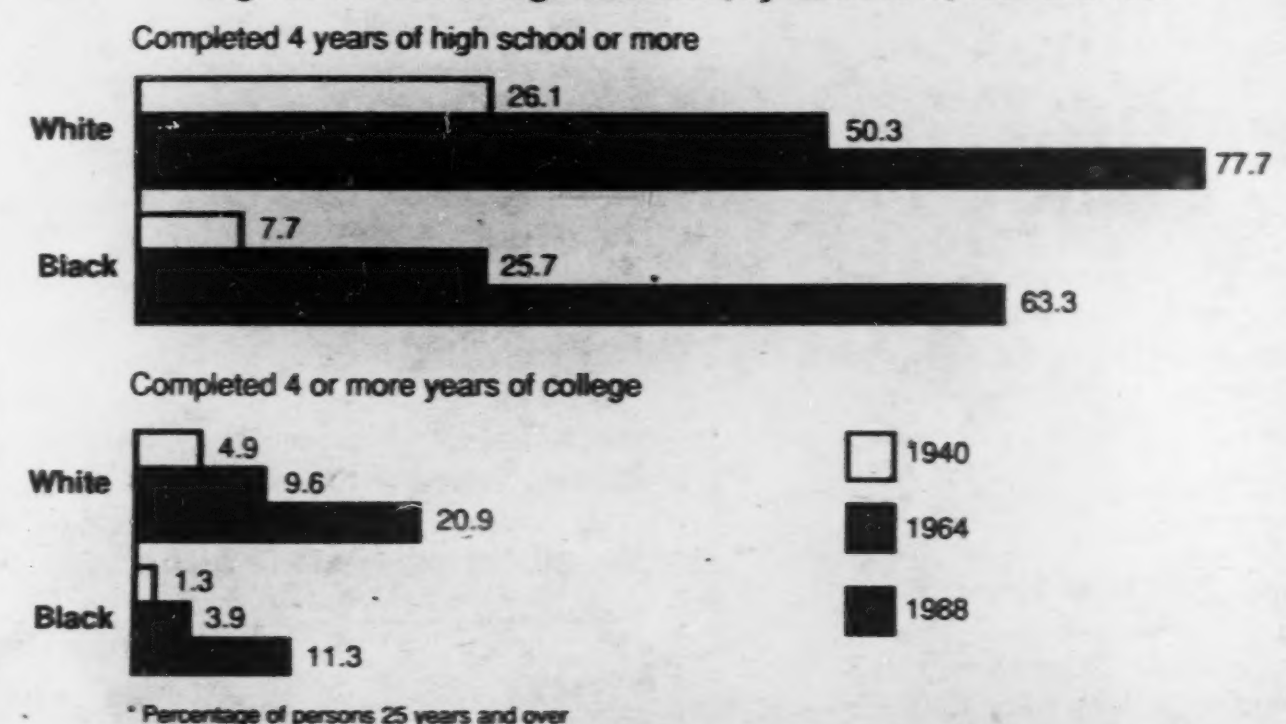
In 1988, 63.3 percent of all blacks ages 25 and over had completed four years of high school—a rate almost four-fifths that of the white population (77.7 percent), the bureau reports. The completion rate is even better for the younger end of that population—those ages 25 to 29—where 87 percent of whites and 81 percent of blacks had completed high school.

By comparison, in 1940, about 8 percent, and in 1964 about 25 percent, of blacks had finished high school.

The data show that more blacks than ever have finished college, but the gap between black and white college graduation rates remains wide. In 1988, approximately 21 percent of all whites ages 25 and over, but only 11.3 percent of all blacks, had completed four years or more of college. In 1940 and 1964, the figures for blacks were 1.3 percent and 3.9 percent, respectively.

The figure for the younger age group of blacks is essentially the same—only 12 percent of blacks ages 25 to 29 have completed college, compared with 24 percent of their white peers.

High School and College Graduates, by Race: 1940, 1964 and 1988 *



UPDATE

■ A three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit has upheld the involuntary transfer of 114 DeKalb County, Ga., teachers as part of that district's effort to desegregate its schools.

A federal judge ordered the transfers this summer before the 11th Circuit ruled in a separate action that the DeKalb County school district must take further steps to racially balance school enrollments. (See *Education Week*, Oct. 25, 1989.)

In its ruling this month, the 11th Circuit panel also denied requests by teachers' groups to become a party to the case, but said the groups could ask the lower court for permission to join the case in light of its earlier decision not to allow the case to be closed.

■ An independent accounting firm has called for new elections in six of Chicago's local school-council races after finding such irregularities as electioneering too close to polling places and the intimidation of voters, according to a spokesman for the district.

After examining 132 challenges to elections held in more than 500 local schools, the accounting firm also overturned the results of four races and declared ties in four others, the spokesman said.

Names will be drawn out of a hat to break the ties, and new elections will be held for the disputed seats later this fall, he said.

The elections were held to fill seats representing parents, teachers, and community residents on the 11-member councils, which will have the power to hire and fire principals, set budgets, and develop school-improvement plans. (See *Education Week*, Oct. 18, 1989.)

■ Four students have been recommended for expulsion and one teacher

is being reassigned in the wake of a violent, racially motivated outburst at Minor High School in Birmingham, Ala., last month. (See *Education Week*, Oct. 25, 1989.)

Following the incident—in which the school's principal and a student were stabbed—Herb Sang, superintendent of the Jefferson County Schools, recommended that Alvin Bonds, an auto-mechanics instructor, be dismissed for firing a gun in the air during the fight. The school board, however, reversed the decision because "they felt that the policy on bringing guns to school was not clear in the employee handbook," Mr. Sang said.

Instead, the board voted to have Mr. Bond reassigned and sent a letter of reprimand. Furthermore, said Mr. Sang, the board recommended that a new policy be written clearly prohibiting employees from carrying weapons.

Two or three police officers continue to patrol the campus part time, but school is basically back to normal, Mr. Sang said.

■ A state judge in El Paso, Tex., has dismissed a lawsuit against the Canutillo Public Schools challenging the district's dress-code policy.

Lawyers for the American Civil Liberties Union had filed the suit on behalf of two students who had been punished for wearing their hair below the collar in violation of a new district policy. (See *Education Week*, Oct. 18, 1989.)

The mother of one student, Ted Murgatroyd, claimed that a teacher gave her son a haircut at school when he refused to comply with the code.

School officials changed the policy after parents complained it was too restrictive.

Because of the policy change, Judge Edward Marquez of the 65th District Court granted a motion by district lawyers to dismiss the suit.